

Monday, November 10, 2009

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# Lincoln Poetry

Poets

Vachel Lindsay

Excerpts from newspapers and other  
sources

From the files of the  
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

The Independent, September 21, 1914.

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN WALKS AT MIDNIGHT

BY VACHEL LINDSAY

It is portentous, and a thing of state

That here at midnight, in our little town  
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest  
Near the old court-house pacing up and down,

Or by his homestead, or the shadowed yards  
He lingers where his children used to play,  
Or thru the market, on the well-worn stones  
He stalks until the dawn-stars burn away.

A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient black.  
A famous high top-hat and plain worn shawl  
Make him the quaint great figure that men love.  
The prairie-lawyer, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside now.  
He is among us, as in times before!  
And we who toss and lie awake for long  
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the door.

His head is bowed. He thinks on men and kings.

Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he sleep?  
Too many peasants fight, they know not why,  
Too many homesteads in black terror weep.

The sins of all the war-lords burn his heart.  
He sees the dreadnoughts scouring every main.  
He carries on his shawl-wrapt shoulders now  
The bitterness, the folly and the pain.

He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn  
Shall come;—the shining hope of Europe free;  
The league of sober folk, the Workers' Earth  
Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp and Sea.

It breaks his heart that kings must murder still,  
That all his hours of travail here for men  
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white peace  
That he may sleep upon his hill again?  
*Springfield, Illinois*

# Lincoln Walks At Midnight.

— 1915 —

[Written at Springfield, Ill., at the beginning of the great European war.]

It is portentous and a thing of state  
That here at midnight, in our little town,  
A mourning figure walks and will not rest  
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That he may sleep upon his hill again?  
—Vachel Lindsay in Independent.

J WRIGHT



The Survey

March 6, 1915

Abraham Lincoln  
Walks At Midnight

*In Springfield, Illinois*  
By VACHEL LINDSAY

[From The Congo and Other  
Poems, by Vachel Lindsay. Section  
entitled War, September, 1914. The  
Macmillan Company. Price \$1.25.]

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*Revised 2-12-18* —Vachel Lindsay.

Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight

The Independent, Feb. 15, 1919

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WALKS AT  
MIDNIGHT

BY NICHOLAS VACHEL LINDSAY

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Vachel Lindsay, of Springfield, Illinois,  
the poet who has tramped across whole

The Wellspring - 14 Beacon St. - Boston, Mass.



© Keystone

*The new Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D. C.*

Saturday, February 10, 1923

states reciting his poetry to the farmers in return for meals, has made up a very beautiful legend about Lincoln. In "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight," he says:

"It is portentous, and a thing of state  
That here at midnight, in our little town  
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest,  
Near the old court house pacing up and  
down.

\* \* \*

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\* \* \*

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Lindsay, Vachel

Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight

"It is portentous and a thing  
of state —"

The American Boy, Feb., 1927



Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight

(In Springfield, Illinois)

By VACHEL LINDSAY



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*From "The Congo and Other Poems," by Vachel Lindsay, copyrighted by the MacMillan Company.*



Lindsay, Vachel  
Vachel Lindsay Says He Often  
Carried One for Months,  
Striving for Clarity

By CLEMENT E. FOUST

Secretary Philadelphia Teachers Association

The other evening we had the rare delight of a chat with Vachel Lindsay, the noted poet. We found him sitting alone, bolt upright in a tuxedo, awaiting the hour of an address. He may have thought it a bit odd for a total stranger to break upon him with an effusive self-introduction, but he extended a most friendly hand and waved us to a chair. Before the evening was over we had gratified a haunting wonder what a great poet might say if he were offered a good cigar. Mr. Lindsay accepted one of ours, with a charming smile and the brief but adequate comment, "Thanks."

In appearance, Vachel Lindsay would attract a second look in a crowd. His is no ordinary mien. As we talked across a table we were caught by a strange distinction in the man. He has a most impressive head, with a rugged nose and mouth and a touch of the leonine. It would be hard to say why, but he exerted the same sort of animal magnetism that we once noted in Paderewski as we observed him leaving the stage door after a recital. It is the poet's brow, however, that marks him for the man of dreams. The eyes are large and mellow and have the certain, rolling look of otherworldliness.

We asked Mr. Lindsay how exactly he managed to acquire the rich and telling diction so noticeable in his poems and whether he ever deliberately sought the poignant word. He said in effect that the individual word never gave him pause. The total idea, the poem as a whole, was his chief concern. And then he said and repeated that we might not miss his sense, the incredible fact that every one of his longer poems was rewritten from 100 to 300 times. Often he would carry a poem in his pocket for months, reading it to friends, noting its effect in their praise or criticism, striving everlastingly for clarity. For a full year he thus labored over "The Chinese Nightingale."

We asked him whether his methods of composition differed in prose and verse. Verse at its best, he said, would often write itself and was the strong, natural, authentic utterance of a thing. His prose was more or less an approximate expression, which later burned clear into poetry. The rhythm of prose differed from verse rhythm by having the beats further apart and irregular.

In the talk that followed to the Normal School Alumni Mr. Lindsay dropped some capital tips for teachers of poetry. He stressed the point that poetry should never be regarded by a teacher as a handy substitute for the birch nor as examples for parsing in a grammar lesson. Poetry was the free, joyous brother of dancing. Its throb and beat and melody are paramount. Children should be allowed to read it aloud in singsong fashion if they wished, for this was its primitive, original utterance. Above all, he condemned setting a poem to instrumental music, for it wrecked both the poem and the accompaniment.

3-19-30

Abraham Lincoln Walks At Midnight  
(In Springfield, Illinois)

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He stalks until the dawn-stars burn away.  
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It breaks his heart that kings must murder  
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That all his hours of travail here for men  
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring  
white peace

That he may sleep upon his hill again?

—Vachel Lindsay.



Lindsay, Vachel

Tribute to Lincoln's Tutor

"Wondering if his  
training was a waste"

# Tribute To Lincoln's Tutor

By Vachel Lindsay

Lincoln arrived in New Salem, a very young man, one hundred and one years ago. Mentor Graham was there before him, and remained after he left for Springfield in 1837.

As Lincoln progressed in his studies in New Salem, Graham tutored him in subjects from grammar to surveying, and Lincoln was a frequent caller at the school house.



VACHEL LINDSAY

—By State Journal Staff Photographer.

*Mentor Graham, School-Master One Hundred And One Years Ago.*

Wondering if his training was a waste,  
And if the prairie laughed his thought to scorn,  
Thus muttered Graham to his Plutarch book,  
With none to shepherd, though a teacher born:—

"I light my tallow dip again tonight  
And say:— 'PERHAPS A MODERN BOY GOES BY,'  
Hurried past door-ways where the watch-dogs growl—  
The hearths the stranger dares not come too nigh.



"They sit in stolid circle at the table,  
And never a son or daughter tells a tale.  
The faithful mothers find no cheer at all.  
No pretty baby's crow can much avail.

"New Salem now grows dull with homes unstirred.  
The preachers prate in too-familiar words.  
Whittlers loaf with wooden eyes, to talk  
Of weeds and fences, barns and flocks and herds.

"Perhaps, tonight, through sorrow, snow and rain  
Some storm-blown boy moves on, that we should keep  
To bring us laughter round the Franklin Stove,  
To show us why we dream and plough and reap.

"Perhaps, tonight, a conqueror comes on,  
Ruler of weariness and fate and pain,  
Within his pockets, note books of his youth,  
Within his soul, great passions held in rein.

"No doubt, tonight, some wild boy passes by  
Bearing wise sayings from the LAW BOOKS grim,  
Or, it may be, a better light than mine,  
More like Aladdin's, not, like this one, dim.

"All it will need—The oil, and wick, and flame,  
And school-house room, to keep the wind away,  
I can provide. Ah, if a lamp he brings,  
It shall be trimmed and burnished every day."

---

Thus, Mentor Graham thought, on New Year's night.  
And 1830 died, with lonely wing.  
But 1831 came in with pride.  
Abe Lincoln found that schoolhouse in the spring.

POEMS WORTH  
READING AGAIN

*Boston Globe*  
Abraham Lincoln Walks at  
Midnight

2-12-35

Vachel Lindsay (1879-1932), in "Poems."

It is portentous, and a thing of state  
That here at midnight, in our little  
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Near the old courthouse pacing up  
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A famous high top-hat, and a plain  
worn shawl  
Make him the quaint great figure  
that men love,  
The prairie lover, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside  
now,  
He is among us:—as in times before!  
And we who toss or lie awake for  
long

Breathe deep, and start, to see him  
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His head is bared. He thinks on men  
and kings.

Yea, when the sick world cries how  
can he sleep?

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Too many homesteads in bleak  
terror weep.

The sins of all the war lords burn  
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He sees the dreadnoughts scouring  
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He carries on his shawl-wrapped  
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The bitterness, the folly, and the  
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The league of sober-folk, the work-  
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Seem yet in vain; and who will bring  
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That he may sleep upon his hill  
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Markham, Edwin  
Lindsay, Vachel

Verses

"The tools where his teachers, sternly kind."  
"When Lincoln came to Springfield,"

## Indiana Honors Nancy Hanks

It is encouraging in the extreme to note that 15,000 persons gathered in a corner of southern Indiana to pay tribute to Nancy Hanks Lincoln, mother of the nation's sixteenth president.

While Lincoln was born in Kentucky and matured in Illinois, it was in the Hoosier state that he spent one-quarter of his life, and here he grew from child's estate to man's.

Lincoln is essentially an Indiana product. He belongs to the nation, but, in a special measure, he also belongs to Indiana.

The life of Lincoln will ever constitute a source of inspiration to the boys and girls of young America.

They will enjoy reading about his birthplace:

"Only a cabin, old and poor,  
Logs and daubing and creaking door;  
A solemn sentinel pointing back  
Over a century's beaten track,  
To a soul that surmounted poverty's hill,  
And cried back to the world, 'You can if you will!'"

They, especially the under-privileged, will appreciate Edwin Markham's lines:

"The tools were his first teachers, sternly kind.  
The plow, the scythe, the maul, the echoing axe.  
Taught him their homely wisdom and their peace.  
He had the plain man's genius—common sense,  
Yet rage for knowledge drove his mind afar;  
He fed his spirit with the bread of books,  
And slaked his thirst at all the wells of thought."

One of the first books studied by Lincoln was a copy of the "Revised Statutes of Indiana," but:

"Abe Lincoln never had no reg'lar schoolin';  
He never quarter backed nor pulled stroke oar,  
Nor never spent his time and money foolin'  
With buried langwidges and ancient lore.  
But . . . Abe l'arned more  
To set him forrerd in the human filin'  
Than all the college fellers' kit and bilin' . . ."

Finally Lincoln went to Springfield, Ill. Read Vachel Lindsay's masterpiece of simplicity:

"When Lincoln came to Springfield,  
In the ancient days,  
Queer were the streets and sketchy,  
And he was in a maze.

"Leaving log cabins behind him,  
For the mud streets of this place;  
Sorrow for Ann Rutledge  
Burned in his face.

"He threw his muddy saddle bags  
On Joshua Speed's floor,  
He took off his old hat,  
He looked around the store.

"He shook his long hair  
On his bison-head,  
He sat down on the counter,  
'Speed, I've moved,' he said."

Such a man was Lincoln. Such a man was the the stalwart, simple son of Nancy Hanks—the man who was profound for all his simplicity.

Such was the man who said: "With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan—to do all which may achieve a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations."

*Gonzalez*



*Ill. St. Journal 6/30/36*  
**Mentor Graham****Young Lincoln's Schoolmaster In New Salem**

BY VACHEL LINDSAY

*Wondering if his training was a waste,  
And if the prairie laughed his thought to scorn,  
Thus muttered Graham to his Plutarch book,  
With none to shepherd, though a teacher born:*

*"I light my tallow dip again tonight  
And say: 'Perhaps a modern boy goes by,'  
Hurried past doorways where the watchdogs growl—  
The hearths the stranger dares not come too nigh.*

*"They sit in stolid circle at the table,  
And never a son or daughter tells a tale.  
The faithful mothers find no cheer at all.  
No pretty baby's crow can much avail.*

*"New Salem now grows dull with homes unstirred.  
The preachers prate in too-familiar words.  
Whittlers loaf with wooden eyes, to talk  
Of weeds and fences, barns and flocks and herds.*

*"Perhaps, tonight, through sorrow, snow and rain  
Some storm-blown boy moves on, that we should keep  
To bring us laughter round the Franklin stove,  
To show us why we dream and plough and reap.*

*"Perhaps, tonight, a conqueror comes on,  
Ruler of weariness and fate and pain,  
Within his pockets, notebooks of his youth,  
Within his soul, great passions held in rein.*

*"No doubt, tonight, some wild boy passes by  
Bearing wise sayings from the law books grim.  
Or, it may be, a better light than mine,  
More like Aladdin's, not, like this one, dim.*

*"All it will need—the oil, and wick, and flame,  
And schoolhouse room, to keep the wind away,  
I can provide. Ah, if a lamp he brings,  
It shall be trimmed and burnished every day."*

*Thus, Mentor Graham thought, on New Year's night.  
And 1830 died, with lonely wing,  
But 1831 came in with pride.  
Abe Lincoln found that schoolhouse in the spring.*

Editor's note: "Mentor Graham" was written by the late Vachel Lindsay for the centennial edition of the Illinois State Journal on Nov. 8, 1931. It is probably his last work published during his lifetime. Since then—on July 23, 1933—the remains of Mentor Graham, brought from Blunt, S. D., have been reinterred in Farmer's Point cemetery, about two miles south of New Salem on the Lincoln National Memorial highway.

*Ill. St. Journal 4/30/36*  
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april 25-1936

WEEK BY WEEK

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WALKS

AT MIDNIGHT

(IN SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS)

It is portentous, and a thing of state  
That here at midnight, in our little town  
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest,  
Near the old court house pacing up and down.

Or by his homestead, or in shadowed yards,  
He lingers where his children used to play,  
Or through the market, on the well worn stones  
He stalks until the dawn-stars burn away.

A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient black,  
A famous high top-hat and plain worn shawl  
Make him the quaint great figure that men love,  
The prairie lawyer, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside now,  
He is among us:—as in times before!  
And we who toss and lie awake for long  
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the door.

His head is bowed. He thinks on men and kings,  
Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he sleep?  
Too many peasant fight, they know not why,  
Too many homesteads in black terror weep.

The sins of all the war-lords burn his heart.  
He sees the dreadnaughts scouring every main.  
He carries on his shawl-wrapped shoulders now  
The bitterness, the folly and the pain.

He cannot rest until a spirit dawn  
Shall come:—the shining hope of Europe free:  
The league of sober folk, the Workers' Earth,  
Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp and Sea.

It breaks his heart that kings must murder still,  
That all his hours of travail here for men  
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white peace  
That he may sleep upon his hill again?

—VACHEL LINDSAY

(Published by permission of author.)

## Verses By Lincoln Brought to Light

### *Poem Inspired by Visit To Childhood Home*

**A** BRAHAM LINCOLN, rising young lawyer of 35 and campaigning for his first term in Congress in 1844, visited some of the scenes of his childhood in Indiana and was so overcome by sentiment that he broke into verse to express his emotions.

Lincoln enclosed this poem, perhaps the only one he ever wrote, in a letter to a certain Andrew Johnson—not the future President—who presumably had been a boyhood friend but of whom nothing further is known. He also kept a copy.

This copy has just been deposited in the Library of Congress by Mrs. Mary Lincoln Isham, of Washington, Lincoln's granddaughter. She found it in her grandfather's handwriting. This is the first time the entire poem has ever seen the light, although a few verses of it were published by Nicolai and Hay, the official biographers of the Civil War President.

The entire poem, copied from the original, follows:

My childhood home I see again  
And gladden with the view,  
And still as memories crowd my brain  
There's sadness in it too.  
O Memory, thou midway world  
Twixt earth and paradise,  
Where things decayed and loved ones  
lost  
In dreamy shadows rise,  
And freed from all that's gross or vile,  
Seem hallowed, pure and bright  
Like scenes in some enchanted vale  
All bathed in liquid light.  
As distant mountains please the eye  
When twilight chases day  
As brighter tones that, passing by,  
In distance die away;  
As leaving some grand waterfall  
We lingering list its roar,  
So memory will hallow all  
We've known, but know no more.  
Now twenty years have passed away  
Since here I bade farewell  
To woods, to field and scenes of play  
And schoolmates loved so well.  
Where many were how few remain  
Of old familiar things,  
But seeing these to mind again  
The lost and absent brings.

The friends I left that parting day,  
How changed as time has sped;  
Young childhood gone, strong manhood

gray,  
And half of all are dead.

I hear the lone survivors tell  
How naught from death could save,  
Till every sound appears a knell,  
And every spot a grave.

I range the fields with pensive tread,  
I pace the hollow rooms,  
And feel, companion of the dead,  
I'm living in their tombs.

And here's an object more of dread  
Than aught the grave contains.  
A human form with reason fled  
While wretched life remains.

Poor Matthew, once of genius bright,  
A fortune-favored child,  
Now locked for aye in mental night,  
A haggard madman wild.

Poor Matthew, I have ne'er forgot  
When first with maddened will  
Yourself you maimed, your father  
fought,  
Your mother strove to kill.

And terror spread and neighbors ran  
Your dangerous strength to bind,  
And soon a howling crazy man  
Your limbs were fast confind.

How then you writhed and shrieked  
aloud,  
Your bones and sinews bared,  
And fiendish on the gaping crowd  
With burning eye-balls glared,

And begged and swore and wept and  
prayed  
With maniac laughter joined;  
How painful are the pains displayed  
By pangs that kill the mind.

And when at length, tho drear and  
long,  
Time soothed your fiercer woes,  
How plaintively your mournful song  
Upon the still night rose.

I've heard it oft as if I dreamed,  
Far distant, sweet and lone.  
The funeral dirge it ever seemed  
Of reason dead and gone.

To drink its dregs I've stole away,  
All silently and still,  
Ere yet the rising God of Day  
Had streaked the eastern hill.

Air held its breath and trees all still  
Seemed sorrowing angels round;  
Their swelling tears in dewdrops fell  
Upon the list'ning ground.

But this is past and naught remains  
That raised you o'er the brute:  
Your maddening shrieks and soothing  
strains,  
Are like forever mute.

Now fare thee well, more thou the cause  
Than subject now of woe;  
All mental pangs by time's kind hand  
Hast lost the power to know.

And now away to seek some scene  
Less painful than the last  
With less of horror mingled in  
The present and the past.

The very spot where grew the bread  
That formed my bones I see,  
How strange old field on thee to tread  
And feel I'm part of thee.

*Phila. Bulletin 4-11-39*



# Consumers Bulletin

of CITY WATER, LIGHT AND POWER DEPARTMENT

VOL. III.

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., AUGUST, 1939

No. 8

## NICHOLAS VACHEL LINDSAY

(1879-1931)

So Many Visitors to the Lake Springfield Area Comment on the Vachel Lindsay Memorial There, That We Thought We Should Say Something About the Man, Lindsay, About the Memorial, and About the Sculptor Who Made the Lindsay Portrait.

It is proper that Springfield, Lindsay's home town that he loved so well, should have a beautiful memorial to her most famous poet-son.

Nicholas Vachel Lindsay was born November 10, 1879, in the little house on the corner of 5th and Edwards Streets. He was a true son of Springfield, growing up and going to school here, making

friends and developing a great admiration and love for Abraham Lincoln and his ideals.

His years in high school, from 1893 to 1897, were very fruitful years for him. His interests in literature and in writing were nurtured by the kindly hand of his English teacher, Susan Wilcox, who, he proudly stated later, was his best and most understanding friend. Lindsay entered Hiram College in the fall of 1897. Hiram is a small college in northeastern Ohio, the president of which was at that time an old and dear friend of Dr. Lindsay, Vachel's father. Within the past several years Hiram built a new library building, and dedicated an attractive reading room to the memory of its student, Vachel



Lindsay. The walls are decorated with several of Lindsay's drawings and the library shelves contain Lindsay's books. In a special case are college annuals, decorated and illustrated by Lindsay during the time he was there.

Lindsay's great love of America and of things American led him all over the country, reading his verses, telling stories and writing of what he was seeing. He preached a gospel of beauty that has not been reached by any other native writer. His greatest love was Springfield, and here he returned in 1929, to the same house in which he was born. Two years later he died, honored as one of America's most really American poets. "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight", "General William

Booth Enters Heaven", "The Congo", "Johnny Appleseed", "On the Building of Springfield", and many others of his beautiful works will live forever. The Lindsay memorial bust and the Lindsay memorial bridge at Lake Springfield will help keep his memory alive in his beloved home town.

### The Lindsay Portrait Bust and its Sculptor

The Lindsays lived in Spokane, Washington, from 1924 to 1929. In their wide circle of acquaintances was an American sculptor of French descent, a native of New York who had studied at the Beaux Arts in Paris, Adrien Voisin. Voisin made a portrait bust of Lindsay while he was living in Spokane. It was this portrait bust, a little larger than lifesize, that was used as the model for the bronze memorial now at the lake. Incidentally, this bronze bust was cast in Newport, Rhode Island, at a very old bronze foundry. It was dedicated at the lake on July 12, 1935.

The Vachel Lindsay memorial portrait was made possible by the generous contribution of a number of Springfield's interested citizens. As a matter of record and as a mark of recognition and appreciation of the city of Springfield for the work done by these citizens, the list of the contributors is printed in this little historical account:

Clayton J. Barber  
Morton D. Barker  
Herbert B. Bartholf  
Mr. A. L. Bowen  
Mrs. A. L. Bowen  
Owsley Brown  
Alice Bunn  
G. W. Bunn, Jr.  
Joseph Figueira  
Pascal E. Hatch  
Illinois State Journal  
Logan Hay  
Elizabeth B. Ide

Illinois State Register  
John W. Kapp  
Harry B. Luers  
Myers Brothers  
John Snigg  
Charles H. Spaulding  
Susan Wilcox  
Willis J. Spaulding  
E. E. Staley  
Robert W. Troxell  
Fred Van Horn  
Louise Welch

## All-Electric Club

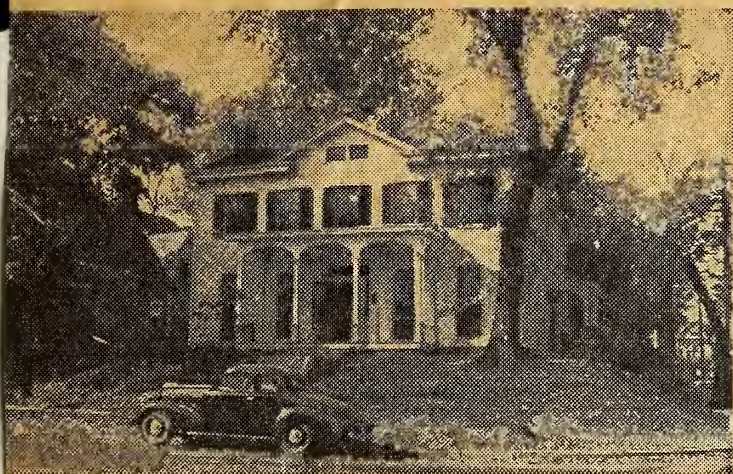
### A-E Club, June, 1939

James Belton 1531 N. Ninth St.	Jesse B. Miller 927 W. Washington St.
W. J. Carson 103 W. Lawrence Ave.	Marie Muscat 614 S. 15th St.
Carl Check 3204 S. Second St.	Fay Nesse 2104 S. 18th St.
C. Y. Costello 3005 S. Sixth St.	Fred Neuman 1118 W. Leland Ave.
J. H. Critchfield 2337 S. 11th St.	J. O. Orr 1941 Whittier Ave.
Dean Curry Lake Area	George Powers 2145 S. 11th St.
Dr. James Donelan 817 S. Seventh St.	Lee Reagan 112 S. College St.
L. Ehlert 336 S. State St.	Henry Reed 615 St. Joseph St.
Louis Feuer 908 E. Reynolds St.	H. V. Register 220 White City Blvd.
J. P. Gardner 1625 S. Eighth St.	Ted Riseman 1461 N. Third St.
S. N. Glisson Lake Area	John Scharafin 918 W. Lawrence Ave.
Herbert Griswold 904 S. Park Ave.	W. J. Siebert 1726 Noble Ave
F. Hartnett 2158 S. Tenth St.	Fred Skinner Lake Area
O. C. Ishmael 1421 N. Fourth St.	W. W. Sime 1723 E. Jackson St.
R. E. Lawler 1016 W. Vine St.	Mrs. Florence Stevens 930 N. Rutledge St.
Mrs. Mary E. Lynd 1701 S. Lincoln Ave.	Charles Stockman 1609 S. Glenwood Ave.
N. H. McRoberts 1601 Holmes Ave.	E. W. Swain Lake Area
A. J. Martzen 2007 E. Capitol Ave.	Clarence Tarr 459 W. Cook St.
Etta C. Taylor 710 S. Eighth St.	Irwin Tews 1805 S. State St.
George Turney 1733 S. Lincoln Ave.	

Springfield Water Costs 5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>5</sub>cts a Ton



## Shrines Of Poet Lindsay Whose Memory Will Be H



LINDSAY HOMESTEAD.



STAIRWAY OF HOME.

*"I'll haunt this town, though gone the maids and men,  
The darling few, my friends and loves today.  
My ghost returns, bearing a great sword-pen  
When far-off children of their children play.*

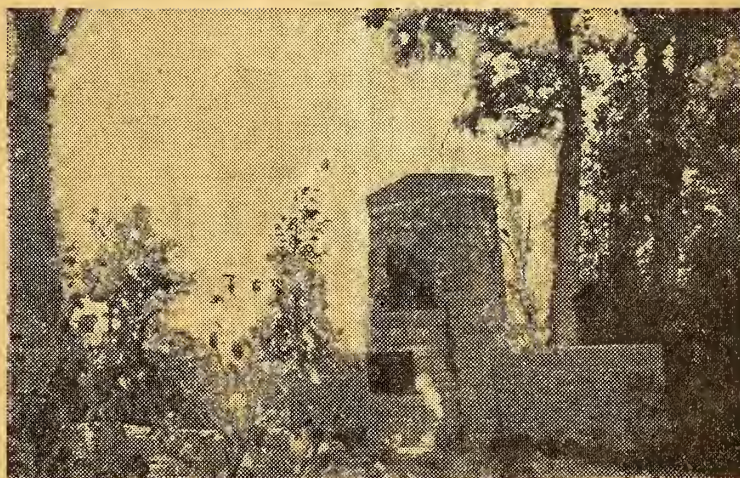
*My pen shall cut in winter's snowy floor  
Cries that in channeled glory leap and shine;  
My Village Gospel, living evermore  
Amid rejoicing, loyal friends of mine."*

Springfield's great poet, Vachel Lindsay, whose fame increases with each passing year, will be honored in a nation-wide broadcast



VACHEL LINDSAY.

—State Journal Photo.



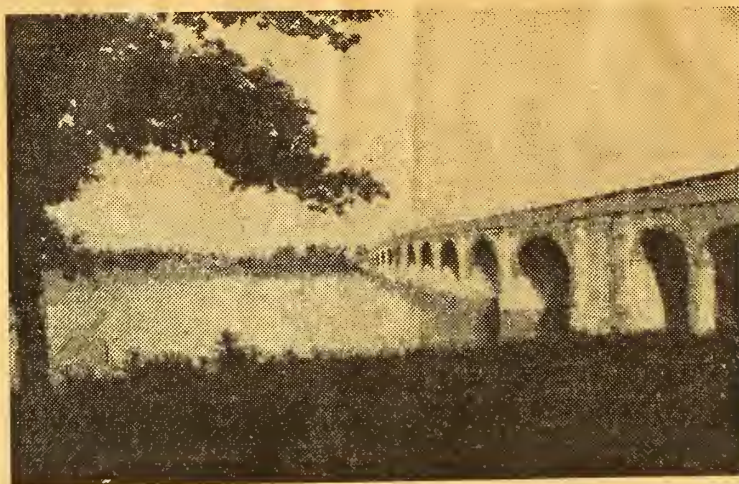
LINDSAY BUST AT LAKE.

at noon today emanating from his old homestead at Fifth and Edwards street. It will be the regular National Broadcasting Co. Sunday feature, "Pilgrimage of Poetry," with Ted Malone the narrator. Mr. Malone already has written twenty-one broadcasts and conducted them from as many poets' homes on the Pilgrimage of Poetry, which is taking him 12,000 miles across country in the name of poetry. A choir of Springfield High school students will sing some of Lindsay's verse during the broadcast.

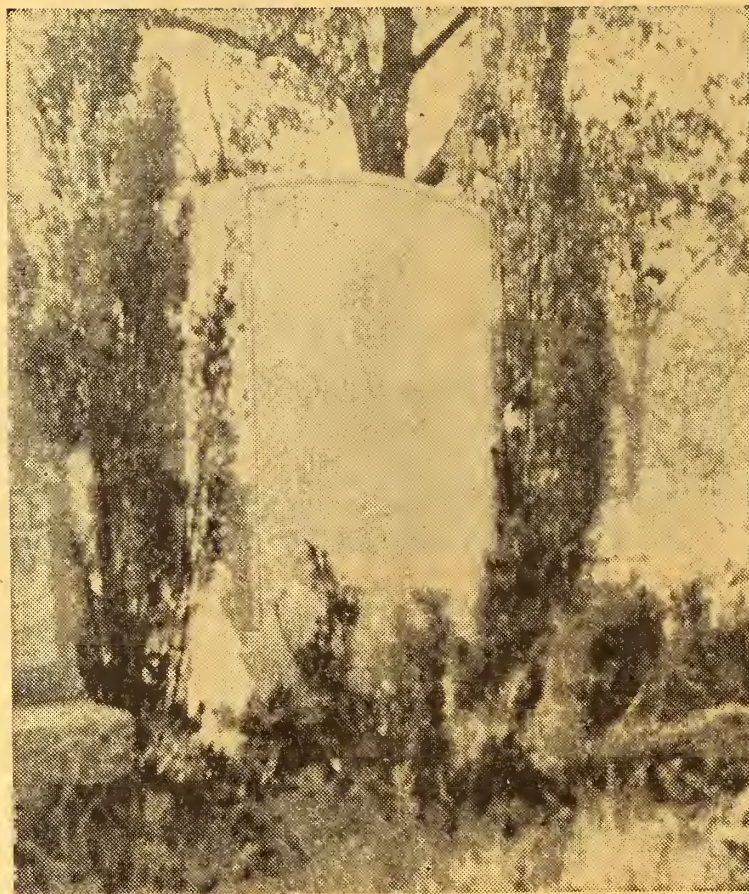
Springfield, Lindsay's home, abounds in shrines of the poet. Some of them are pictured above, with a photo of Lindsay himself taken



## onored In Broadcast Today



MEMORIAL BRIDGE.



GRAVE IN OAK RIDGE.

shortly before his death in 1931. The pictures of his homestead, the interior staircase, the Lindsay Memorial bridge at Lake Springfield, his grave in Oak Ridge cemetery and his bust near the lake bridge are reproduced here from an album privately distributed by Miss Susan E. Wilcox, former head of the English department at Springfield High school, and Miss Elizabeth Graham, who now holds that position. Mrs. C. E. Knapp took the pictures.

Miss Wilcox, who was Vachel Lindsay's teacher in Springfield High school in the '90's, and Miss Graham, prepared the album as Christmas presents for a few close friends. It contains excerpts of Lindsay's poetry and a wide range of pictures of places associated with the poet in Springfield.



### From the Treasure Chest

#### Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight

It is portentous, and a thing of state  
That here at midnight, in our little town  
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest,  
Near the old courthouse pacing up and down,

Or by his homestead, or in shadowed yards  
He lingers where his children used to play,  
Or through the market, on the well-worn stones  
He stalks until the dawn-stars burn away.

A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient  
black,

A famous high-top hat and plain worn shawl  
Make him the qualnt great figure that men  
love,  
The prairie lawyer, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside now.  
He is among us:—as in times before!  
And we who toss and lie awake for long  
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the  
door.

His head is bowed. He thinks on men and  
kings.

Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he  
sleep?

Too many peasants fight, they know not why,  
Too many homesteads in black terror weep.

The sins of all the war-lords burn his heart.  
He sees the dreadnaughts scouring every main.  
He carries on his shawl-wrapped shoulders  
now

The bitterness, the folly and the pain.

He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn  
Shall come;—the shining hope of Europe free:  
The league of sober folk, the Workers' Earth,  
Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp and Sea.

It breaks his heart that kings must murder  
still,

That all his hours of travail here for men  
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white  
peace

That he may sleep upon his hill again?

—(Nicholas) Vachel Lindsay.

LINCOLN WALKS AT MIDNIGHT

(Excerpt)

He cannot sleep upon his hillside now,  
He is among us—as in times before!  
And we who toss and lie awake for long,  
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the  
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His head is bowed. He thinks of men and  
things,  
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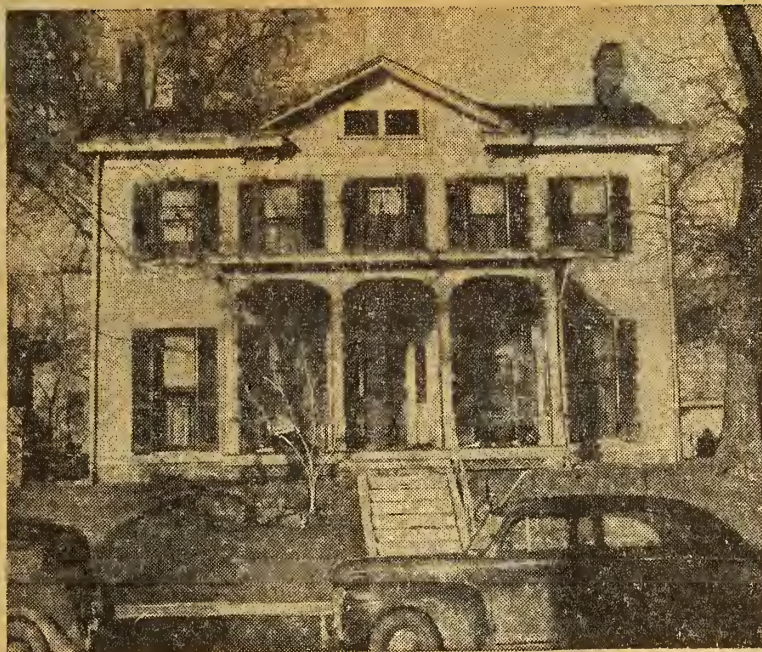
That he may sleep upon his hill again?

—Vachel Lindsay.

*Scout City*  
*Journal*  
*3-13-41*



## HOME OF ILLINOIS POET



Vachel Lindsay, poet and writer, was born in this Springfield house in 1879 and here he died in 1931. Before his parents moved into it this dwelling was occupied by Clark Smith, a leading Springfield merchant, whose wife was Abraham Lincoln's sister-in-law. The Lincolns often visited the Smiths here.

## OLD ILLINOIS HOUSES

by John Drury

### THE VACHEL LINDSAY HOME.

Considerably overshadowed by the widespread fame of another old house a few blocks away, a house in which lived a great, gaunt man whose name is immortal, the Vachel Lindsay home in Springfield Ill., nonetheless holds its own as an historic shrine, particularly as an object of veneration to literary pilgrims. It was in this attractive old dwelling, shaded by several elms and maples, that Vachel Lindsay, known in American literary history as "the tramp poet," was born, and here he died 52 years later.

But this is not its only claim to recognition. For it has close associations with Abraham Lincoln and Mrs. Lincoln. Here both of them often came as visitors in the days before they left Springfield for Washington and here Lincoln's sister-in-law presided as chatelaine for many years. And at a later date the brooding spirit of Lincoln seemed to cling to this house, impressing the mind of the youthful

Vachel Lindsay and inspiring him, when he grew to maturity, to write numerous poems on the Lincoln theme, the best known of which is "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight."

### Near Governor's Mansion.

Research by Paul M. Angle, librarian of the Illinois State Historical Society and author of "Here I Have Lived," reveals that this house, which stands at 603 South Fifth street (just in back of the Governor's Mansion), was owned and occupied in the middle 50's by Clark M. Smith, a leading Springfield merchant. Smith is believed to have moved into this dwelling soon after his marriage to Anna Maria Todd, younger sister of Mary Todd, wife of Abraham Lincoln.

Here the Smiths lived and played important roles in the social life of ante-bellum Springfield. It was in a back room on the third floor of Smith's dry goods store, which fronted on Springfield's courthouse square, that President-Elect Lincoln began writing the address he was to deliver at his inauguration in Washington. He chose this place in order to avoid the crowds who came to see him at his law office. The Smith desk on which he wrote the address is now on display in the Illinois State Historical Library in the Centennial Building.

### Born in November, 1879.

While the Smiths were still living in the Fifth street house there came

to Illinois from Kentucky a young doctor named Vachel Thomas Lindsay. He practiced medicine in Springfield, married an Indiana school teacher and artist named Esther Catherine Frazee? in 1876, and a few years later became owner and occupant of the Smith abode on Fifth street. Here Vachel Lindsay was born on Nov. 10, 1879. As he grew up his father continued to practice medicine and his old-fashioned horse and buggy was a familiar sight on Springfield streets, even long after the coming of the automobile.

From Edgar Lee Masters biography, "Vachel Lindsay: A Poet in America," we learn that when Vachel was eight or nine years old he played with his cousin, Ruby Lindsay, who lived next door to the Abraham Lincoln home on 8th street. The then custodian of the Lincoln home, who was fond of youngsters, often invited little Vachel and his cousin into the Lincoln house and here the future poet first became imbued with the Lincoln spirit.

### Famous as "Tramp Poet."

When he grew to maturity, Vachel Lindsay wandered out into the world, walked on foot up and down and across America, became famous as "the tramp poet," read, or rather chanted, his poems to farmers and college students, and then, after his marriage to Elizabeth Conner at Spokane in 1925, returned to Springfield and settled down in the house in which he was born. Here his two children were born and here he wrote many poems. And here, in 1931, he fell victim to a mental illness and took his own life.

Now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Arthur McGee, the house today is in sound condition. It is of frame construction, two stories high, and has suggestions, especially on the porch and cornices, of the Greek Revival style in vogue before the Civil War. The interior is typical of its period, with living rooms containing windows that reach from floor to ceiling. The room in which Vachel Lindsay wrote many of his poems is on the second floor in the northwest corner. His body is in Oak Ridge Cemetery, not far from the tomb of his fellow townsman, Abraham Lincoln.

(This is the 22d of a series of articles on famous old Illinois houses appearing each Friday in The Daily News. Readers are invited to submit suggestions.)

*Chicago Daily News*  
Aug. 29, 1941



7/3/42  
Lindsay  
THE DAYT

Abraham Lincoln Walks  
At Midnight

It is portentous, and a thing of state  
That here at midnight, in our little town  
A mourning figure walks, and will not  
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Near the old courthouse pacing up and  
down.

Or by his homestead, or in shadowed yards  
He lingers where his children used to  
play,  
Or through the market, on the well-worn  
stones  
He stalks until the dawn-stars burn  
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A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient  
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A famous high-top hat and plain worn  
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Make him the quaint great figure that  
men love,  
The prairie lawyer, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside now.  
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And we who toss and lie awake for long  
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass  
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His head is bowed. He thinks on men and  
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Yea, when the sick world cries, how can  
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Seem yet in vain. And who will bring  
white peace  
That he may sleep upon his hill again?

—Vachel Lindsay.



**K. M.  
Landis II**

## Lincoln Walks at Midnight

**Would He Have Felt Complimented by Dewey's Visit?**

Vachel Lindsay once wrote a famous poem entitled: Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight in Springfield, Illinois.

The thing made me wonder whether the ghost of Lincoln might have been abroad the other afternoon when Gov. Dewey paid a visit to his tomb on the way to the GOP Governors' conference at St. Louis.

"As leader of the Republican party today," said Dewey, "I reverently place this wreath before the tomb of Abraham Lincoln. May God make us worthy of his spirit and of his name."

It was a graceful gesture for Dewey to make, but why did he approach Lincoln in his official capacity?

We know Dewey is leader of the Republican party today, just as Lincoln was 88 years ago. And it may be that this gives him some special right to commune with Lincoln that the rest of us do not have.

### WHY CREDENTIALS?

But in making a pilgrimage it is not ordinarily necessary to display credentials. Especially should this be true at the tomb of an unpretentious man who was always ready to talk to anybody.

I thought of Dewey and then of Lindsay's lines—

*"A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient black,  
A famous high top-hat and plain worn shawl  
Make him the quaint great figure that men love,  
The prairie-lawyer, master of us all."*

Do you suppose Lincoln was around? A mourning figure, as the poet imagined, who

could not rest—

*"Near the old courthouse pacing up and down,  
Or by his homestead, or in shadowed yards  
He lingers where his children used to play . . ."*

Dewey inspected the old Lincoln home on 8th st., and as he left the newspapermen scribbled down his comment:

"Very impressive and very charming."

Dewey meant well, and perhaps Lincoln would have felt complimented to know that the new leader of the Republican party had visited his tomb and his house before proceeding to St. Louis to tackle the question of States' rights.

### HIS VIEWPOINT

You may remember that in leaving Albany, Dewey was asked whether there would be anyone at the conference to represent the Federal point of view, since the Governors were likely to be partisans of States' rights.

"I think Gov. Bricker and I will exercise that viewpoint," he replied, "since we face the possibility of having to exercise that responsibility."

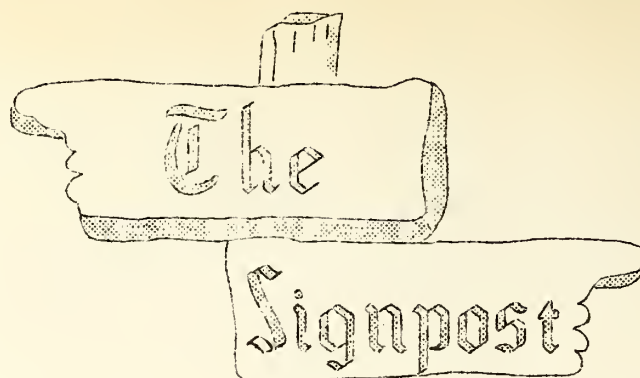
All of us know how Lincoln faced that responsibility when the advocates of States' rights insisted that there should be no Federal interference with the extension of slavery—the great national problem of his day.

And it would be fair to assume—after what happened at Springfield—that Lincoln would be somewhat interested in whether the St. Louis conference was in any way affected by Dewey's entreaty:

"May God make us worthy of his spirit and his name."

*State Record 8-9-44*

Mailing Place  
for  
Praise-Gripes  
and News to  
Post Office Box 53  
Metuchen, N. J.



We Meet  
Wednesdays, 7:00 P.M.  
The Pines  
Route 27  
Metuchen, N. J.

Written in 1909

42 Years Ago

### ABRAHAM LINCOLN WALKS AT MIDNIGHT

(In Springfield, Illinois)

by Vachel Lindsay

It is portentous, and a thing of state  
That here at midnight, in our little town  
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest,  
Near the old court-house pacing up and down,

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Or through the market, on the well-worn stones  
He stalks until the dawn-stars burn away.

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He is among us;--as in times before!  
And we who toss and lie awake for long  
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the door.

His head is bowed. He thinks on men and kings.  
Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he sleep?  
Too many peasants fight, they know not why,  
Too many homesteads in black terror weep.

To the members of the Kiwanis Club  
Rahway, New Jersey

from "Tommy" Tompkins

"When seen contextually, early Disciple preaching was fresh and original. What is more, it belongs not merely to the past but thrusts its insistent questions into the present as Disciples stand at the fork of the road between two sharply contrasting pulpit traditions."

#### The Lecturer

Dwight E. Stevenson has been associated with Lexington Theological Seminary for over twenty years, coming to the Seminary staff in 1947 after serving almost fifteen years in Bethany, West Virginia. From 1933 to 1944 he was pastor of the Bethany Memorial Church in Bethany and then for three years headed the newly merged departments of religion and philosophy at Bethany College.

Dr. Stevenson has interrupted his twenty years at Lexington Theological Seminary for periods of study and world-wide service. Among these assignments were terms as visiting professor at Union Theological Seminary in Manila, chaplain and professor of religion for Chapman College of the Seven Seas in a "round-the-world" semester, and most recently as visiting scholar and visiting professor, respectively, at Pacific School of

Religion in Berkeley, California and Claremont [California] School of Theology. An earlier sabbatical leave was spent in Europe and the Holy Land.

Some twenty books have Dr. Stevenson as author or collaborator. The latest of Dr. Stevenson's books is *A Way in the Wilderness*, published last year by the Bethany Press.

#### The Lectureship

Dr. Stevenson's lectures at the Disciples of Christ Historical Society will be the fourth in the annual series of Forrest F. Reed Lectures. The selection of this year's speaker was made by a committee headed by Robert W. Burns, Atlanta, and including Roscoe M. Pierson, Lexington, Kentucky, Wayne H. Bell, and Forrest F. Reed, both of Nashville. Hugh M. Riley, Louisville, Kentucky and Willis R. Jones, Nashville, also served on the committee in an ex officio capacity.

The Forrest F. Reed Lectureship was established October 3, 1964 through a gift made by Forrest F. Reed, trustee and former DCHS Board Chairman. The lectures are to be held annually under the auspices of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society.

### NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Ronald E. Osborn, DCHS founding and life member and trustee, has been named by Society chairman Hugh M. Riley to head a committee to select nominees for officers and trustees of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society for the year beginning July 1, 1969. Other members of the committee are Harvey M. Harker, Houston, Texas and Mrs. William H. Smith, Nashville.

The Bylaws of the Society require that the names of the committee be published and that suggestions of members of the Society be invited.

Three year terms of the following trustees expire this year: Louis Cochran, Nashville; Harvey M. Harker, Houston, Texas; Loren

E. Lair, Des Moines; Mrs. B. D. Phillips, Butler, Pennsylvania; Roscoe M. Pierson, Lexington, Kentucky; Mrs. R. Richard Renner, Cleveland; and John Rogers, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The terms of all officers (elected annually) also expire. Present officers are Hugh M. Riley, chairman; Howard E. Short, vice-chairman; William F. Greenwood, treasurer; and Roscoe M. Pierson, secretary. The Executive Committee is composed of the officers and three other members. The additional members are Harry M. Davis, John E. Hurt, and Forrest F. Reed.

All trustees, officers, and members of the Executive Committee are eligible to succeed themselves.



## HEROES OF THE FAITH

By PERRY E. GRESHAM

*Editorial Note:* Dr. Perry E. Gresham, fourteenth President of Bethany College and Founding and Life Member of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, delivered this address at the Society's Eleventh Annual Convention Dinner in Kansas City, Missouri, October 1, 1968. The first half of the address appeared in the Fall 1968 DISCIPLIANA and discussed Errett Weir McDiarmid and Edward Scribner Ames.

### NICHOLAS VACHEL LINDSAY 1879-1931

At the University of Denver in 1927 I attended convocation to hear Vachel Lindsay read his own poems. He stood about 5'9" tall and weighed about 160 pounds. He had a rather broad face marked with considerable intensity and a disarming smile. As he spoke there was a slight lisp. He captured the mood of the college students as readily as Eugene McCarthy has done recently—with about the same results of stamping, yelling, honking, and tooting. There were differences, however; Lindsay was trying to persuade them to become poets while McCarthy was trying to become President of the United States. I shall never forget that one experience with Vachel Lindsay. There was a quality of greatness about the man which surpassed his considerable art. At the appropriate moment I introduced myself as another follower of Alexander Campbell to which he warmly responded by quoting,

"Let a thousand prophets have their due.

Let each have his boat in the sky.  
But you were born for his secular millennium

With the old Kentucky forest blooming like Heaven,

And the redbirds flying high."

Vachel Lindsay, *Collected Poems*, pp. 358.

When I enrolled at Texas Christian University I found the memory of Lindsay's visit there still vital and fresh. Dura-Louise Cockrell had picked up his Johnny Appleseed interest in creating new artists. She could recall in great detail his remarks, his attitudes, and his ideas—all of which she verified by producing his poems, paintings, and drawings. Lindsay had enjoyed a very



Vachel Lindsay

considerable friendship with Professor A. Joseph Armstrong, the Browning authority at Baylor University. His Texas visits were frequent enough that he could have been elected Poet Laureate of Texas had he moved there instead of to Spokane, to find what he thought would be a paradise for a creative artist. The Henry Bowdens, who were among my closest friends in Fort Worth, had been intimately associated with Vachel Lindsay and his mother in the First Christian Church of Springfield, Illinois. They told me many interesting stories of those Springfield days when Lindsay would sit on the back row of church looking up at the ceiling during the sermon. On one Sunday Ray Eldred, a returned Congo missionary, gave the sermon, and from this

sermon came Lindsay's famous poem "The Congo."

The Lindsay parents were solid members of middle-class Springfield, Illinois. His father was an able general practitioner who healed the ill and dispensed wise moral advice along with his helpful prescriptions. Vachel's mother, however, had more influence over the boy on account of the fact that she was a strong woman who evoked from him ambivalent attitudes. She was Esther Catharine Frazee, who was the activist Campbellite daughter of Ephraim Samuel Frazee, who was "The Proud Farmer" of Lindsay's famous poem. Esther Catharine Lindsay was the natural president of the Christian Women's Fellowship equivalent of her time. She would have been president of Church Women United if she were now living. She was an eloquent public speaker, a gifted politician, and an aggressive organizer. She expected Vachel to become a physician and was reconciled to his interest in art only when she heard Oxford University listening to him on her English visit. When asked to dedicate a poem to his mother Vachel said, "Whatever I owe my mother or father, I certainly do not owe them the dedication of a single line I ever wrote." (Edgar Lee Masters, *Vachel Lindsay*, p. 357.) He did, however, idealize her in his moving poem "The Hearth Eternal," which begins,

"There dwelt a widow learned and  
devout,  
Behind our hamlet on the eastern  
hill . . . ."

He shows her building the home so that even though thieves came and stole all the house away from it, the hearth still glowed calling weary travelers to brotherhood.

"Thus has the widow conquered half  
the earth,  
She who increased in faith, though all  
alone,  
Who kept her empty house a magic  
place,  
Has made the town a holy angel's  
throne."

Vachel Lindsay, *Collected Poems*,  
pp. 345-346.

Instead of medicine Lindsay early turned his attention to art and was enrolled as a student at art schools in Chicago and New York after his relatively unsuccessful student days at Hiram College. He was not a success as a painter and his drawing, while marvelous for illustrative purposes, was too complicated and involved to have wide appeal. It soon became apparent that his true art form was poetry, but no one was interested in publishing it, reading it, hearing it, or encouraging it. It was at this period he started out walking through the countryside in a sort of Johnny Appleseed effort to cause poetry to spring up wherever he passed along. You can imagine the startled skepticism of a Pennsylvania farmer of whom this walking traveler asked food and lodging for which he would pay in poems read and occasionally a poem written. It was from this that Lindsay's book *Rhymes to be Traded for Bread* developed. Lindsay's fame as a writer came about 1912 when he was thirty-three. In the early autumn of 1912 some magazine articles he had written about his tramping days began to catch the attention of literary people. In 1913 his "Chinese Nightingale" and "General William Booth Enters into Heaven" brought him substantial national notice. He became a genuine celebrity with all the problems of autograph hunters, lecture tours, demands on his time and attention to read worthless verse written by his hearers, and to give literary advice which he was unable to deliver.

He exemplified the heartland of America in terms of the restless yearning for values just beginning to emerge. In 1926 near Detroit, riding the train, he wrote to his wife, Elizabeth Conner Lindsay, whom he had married in 1925,

I am in sight of a new nationalism in  
poetry, possibly best voiced from the  
Spokane region after we have really  
made friends with some injuns. I see  
this whole land as a unit. I have  
traveled over it so much, and a thou-  
sand songs and drawings have almost  
reached the surface about it. There is  
something in me that is patriotic, I just  
can't help it, and I see the whole land  
as a unit from the very beginning.

Patriotism like love is a most imperfect passion, and surely I have it, with all its imperfections. The fact that it is generally tied up with war has almost spoiled it for me, but just the same I have seen this land as a whole, and as a peaceful splendor, and it really means a very great deal to me. I seem to have a kind of heartache for every State in the Union, no matter how silly that may seem. I love the United States, however strange that may be. And in spite of all the struggle of this tour I love the land I have passed over, and the land I have looked upon. Every morning from the train has been lovely, and every evening has been lovely. Spring will not be all gone when I get to Spokane. We will love the earth.

Edgar Lee Masters, *Vachel Lindsay*, p. 346.

Those Spokane days did not yield the satisfaction he had anticipated. He was constantly on the road, always in financial difficulty, never at peace with himself, and seldom at peace with other people. He was able to write little because he lectured more. He was no longer the fighting prohibitionist evangelist preaching the gospel of beauty but was rather more devoted to some of the values of John Barleycorn whom he had once so roundly denounced. His zeal for beauty, however, was unabated. He had come to have serious questions about many of his former commitments, even his major commitment to America as viewed in the perspective of the Campbellite faith.

He was a loyal Disciple until his death, but his major questions derived from the fact that the Disciple Millennium did not come off as scheduled. Even before he was "discovered" as a poet he was saying about his hero idol Alexander Campbell, "He brought the baptism upon which all Christendom unites; the confession on which they all unite; the repentance upon which they all unite;" but he continued later in the same diary, "The denominations are not like Jonah—they will not offer themselves to be swallowed by the Disciples' whale." His lovely sister, Olive, married a Hiram boy who later left the Campbellites to become "a somewhat revolutionary Episcopal

missionary to the Orient." It was a discussion with this brother-in-law that prompted Lindsay to write his "Rhymed Address to all Renegade Campbellites, Exhorting Them to Return." This is included in his long poem called "Alexander Campbell." As an introduction to the poem he quotes a passage from the November, 1865 *Millennial Harbinger* which is the closing paragraph in Alexander Campbell's last essay. As he devoted himself to the business at hand of calling the wayward Campbellites to repentance he said,

"I come to you from Campbell,  
Turn again, prodigal  
Haunted by his name!  
Artist, singer, builder,  
The forest's son or daughter!  
You, the blasphemer  
Will yet know repentance,  
And Campbell old and gray  
Will lead you to the dream-side  
Of a pennyroyal river.  
While your proud heart is shaken  
Your confession will be taken  
And your sins baptized away."

Vachel Lindsay, *Collected Poems*, pp. 357-58.

Edgar Lee Masters is the principal biographer of Vachel Lindsay, but Masters did not understand the Christian Churches. He thought of the Campbellites as a narrow and restricted religious body whose influence had been adverse on Lindsay. He does, however, tell the Lindsay story in a moving and persuasive fashion. The account of Lindsay's death is so poignantly told by Edgar Lee Masters that I let him close the story.

After a long day marked by Vachel's alternating periods of depression and high spirits, Mrs. Lindsay went to bed and fell into sleep.

In about fifteen minutes she was awakened by sounds of something crashing downstairs. And then she heard footsteps heavy and fast, and then the sound of Lindsay coming upstairs on his hands and knees. Mrs. Lindsay rushed out to get him. . . . By this time, Lindsay was running through the



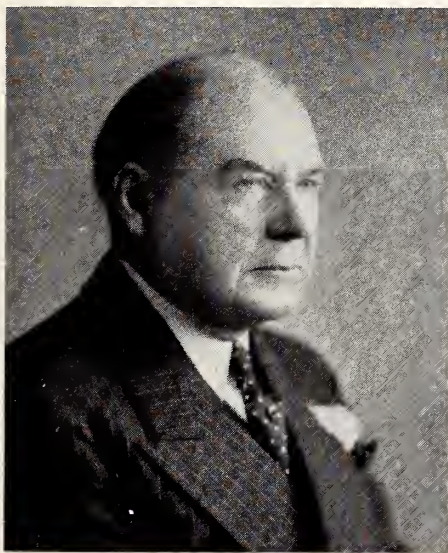
upstairs hall, with his hands up, looking white and scared. As Mrs. Lindsay screamed he fell. When he was put in bed he asked for water, saying 'I took lysol.' A doctor was quickly summoned, but when he arrived Lindsay had ceased to breathe. . . . It was December 5, 1931, at one o'clock in the morning . . .

His funeral was as distinguished as sorrow could make it, and desire to erase past neglect could contrive. The City Council of Springfield, and the Legislature of Illinois passed resolutions of respect, and sermons and orations filled Springfield at the churches and in the schools, to the accompaniment of many tributes from the American press far and near. He was buried not far from the tomb of Lincoln, and committed to the centuries, as his idol had been sixty-seven years before.

Edgar Lee Masters, *Vachel Lindsay*, pp. 361-362.

#### EDGAR DEWITT JONES 1876-1956

It was a pleasant day at Wichita Falls, Texas when I first met Edgar DeWitt Jones.



Edgar DeWitt Jones

The year was 1931 and the occasion was the State Convention of the Christian Churches. He gave two addresses, "Lords of Speech" and "The Matterhorn of the Holy Scriptures." I was enchanted by these great addresses which came so strikingly from his cultured voice, his lordly bearing, his winning humor, and his natural eloquence. This was beyond all doubt the most remarkable eloquence I had experienced even though I had listened to William Jennings Bryan and Clarence Darrow. My admiration for him was reinforced and heightened by his visit to lecture at Texas Christian University when I was already on the faculty and serving concurrently as pastor of the University Christian Church. I brought him to Fort Worth to address the Council of Churches on the subject "The Road to Unity Needs Mending," which I had heard him deliver at our convention in Des Moines. While there he addressed the student body on the subject "Adventures among Great Americans." It was there I realized his matchless wit and humor in such remarks as, "Henry Clay had the mouth of an orator. It is rumored that he could whisper in his own ear."

In the summer of 1936 I preached at Central Woodward Christian Church in Detroit at the invitation of my then warm friend Edgar DeWitt Jones. He was out of the city, but I could see his greatness in that million dollar Gothic structure which commanded Woodward Avenue and gave character to that sprawling motor city. The Wellington Logans, who entertained me, told me of his mighty achievements in Detroit and throughout the world. I was unknown in Detroit and few people attended the Sunday service. The congregation had taken a holiday along with their distinguished minister. It was then, however, that I came to know Marian Van Liew Lincoln who presides at that four manual Casavant Organ—the generous gift of the late Almena Studley Gray, the widow of the late Philip Gray, who had been an important factor in building the church. He was the original counsel for Ford Motor Company. Dr. Jones wrote a daily column for the *Detroit News* which I read with consummate interest. His columns were warm and friendly vignettes of life.

After many unforeseen difficulties Dr. Jones arranged for me to succeed him as minister of Central Woodward Christian Church in Detroit. It was May of 1947 when this new relationship began. It was the most happy combination of personalities in the history of successor and predecessor in any Campbellite church known to man. Instead of resenting the fact that the flock turned to Dr. Jones for weddings and funerals, I found more time to write and lecture. Instead of his resenting the fact that some of his old friends turned to me for weddings and funerals, he found more opportunity to write and lecture. "In honour preferring one another" was best exemplified in that delightful fellowship. My first wife, Elsie, passed away the day after Easter Sunday in 1948. We had just moved into our new home. Edgar stood by me like a wise old hero and enabled me to stand up to the eventualities of life. I shall never forget his words at her memorial service. He was a grand pastor as well as a great preacher.

This interesting man was born in Hearne, Texas in the year of 1876. To the best of

my knowledge this is the most notable fact about Hearne, Texas, but it was not considered a momentous occasion at the time. Edgar's mother passed away as she gave birth to this little baby who would one day make the nation's welkins ring with his eloquence. The women of the community said too bad the baby did not die with his mother. The child grew to manhood in the home of his relatives who gave him exposure to the civilizing influences that enabled him to become the urbane and cultured man which he was. He developed the inner confidence that enabled him to speak with kings and emperors or their servants with the same high regard for personality and a respect for the worth of every individual which caused him to clothe each person he knew with an heroic dimension. He was almost Shakespearean in this respect.

After attending Transylvania College and The College of the Bible he located in Erlanger, Kentucky, which is suburban to Cincinnati. There he preached for four churches in Boone County and allowed his sermonic ability to greatness. Later he wrote a book about his Kentucky ministry, *Fairhope: The Annals of a Country Church*, published by Macmillan in 1917. His reputation as a preacher was established not only in those four small churches but in the several celebrated platforms to which he was invited. He moved from there to Franklin Circle Christian Church in Cleveland and from there to the First Christian Church of Bloomington, Illinois, where he developed his lifelong affection for Abraham Lincoln. He came to Detroit in 1920 where he took his place among the stars. Every high office open to an American preacher was his. He appeared on every notable platform, in every celebrated pulpit, and was one of the pioneer presidents of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. His genius built that great Gothic church which stands as a monument to his ministry. He there earned a reputation as one of America's foremost speakers, writers, lecturers, and personalities. His dress was impeccable but not meticulous. There was a studied carelessness about the rim of his hat or his flowing pocket handkerchief. He carried a stick with dignity and dressed the

#### NEW ANNUAL MEMBERS

Bower, Mrs. Dorothy, Denver, Colo.  
 Creasy, William C., Nashville, Tenn.  
 Emerson, Charles L., Eureka, Ill.  
 Glory Appelles Class, Peachtree Christian Church, Atlanta, Ga.  
 Graham, Ronald W., Lexington, Ky.  
 Himmel, Mrs. Irvin, Temple Terrace, Fla.  
 Howell, J. W., Iuka, Miss.  
 McKnight, Charles, Shauavon, Saskatchewan, Canada  
 Nichols, Clyde E., Temple, Tex.  
 Nighbert, Mrs. Sara, Indianapolis, Ind.  
 Price, Ralph K., Broomall, Pa.  
 Tester, N. Eugene, Elgin, Ill.  
 Woodson, Thomas M., Nashville, Tenn.  
 Wright, D. D., Shelbyville, Ill.  
 Young, Philip L., St. Louis, Mo.



part of the cultured gentleman he had become. When he entered a room everyone turned in his direction.

America's foremost teachers of speech were fascinated by Dr. Jones. The chairman of the department at the University of Michigan brought him to the campus as the event of the year for his entire speech department. His book *Lords of Speech* gave heroic dimensions to American orators. His sermons on preaching gave more than usual emphasis to the delivery of the sermon as appropriate to the message and the personality of the preacher. Some of his preaching titles are *The Royalty of the Pulpit*, *Sermons I Love to Preach*, *A Man Stood Up to Preach*, *Pulpit Stairs*, *This Great Business of Preaching*, and several others. No wonder the preachers of the world loved him for he understood them as few men have and fewer will. Now that the emphasis on pulpit oratory has all but disappeared the memory of Edgar DeWitt Jones rings yet more grandly.

Dr. Jones was an easy companion of Abraham Lincoln. He knew the trails over which Lincoln wandered. He understood Lincoln's upward mobility and describes it in his book *The Greatening of Abraham Lincoln*. He knew Lincoln's interest in theology and fascination with the church and describes both of them in his volume *Lincoln and the Preachers*. His lectures on Abraham Lincoln were delivered in the major cities of America, Canada, and Great Britain. On Lincoln's birthday each year he held a dinner in honor of our most com-

passionate President described by Sandburg as one who "took far lights and tall rainbows to live by." Sandburg loved Edgar DeWitt Jones and inscribed one of his Lincoln books to Edgar with the interesting dedication, "May the peace of great phantoms be yours."

It seems a pity that such heroes of the faith as McDiarmid, Ames, Lindsay, and Jones should die. It would seem more appropriate for them to mount up to heaven in chariots of fire. In the memory of those of us who love and remember them this is precisely what happened. Death is an episode rather than a state of darkness. Edgar DeWitt Jones understood this.

When he was ill he said to his distinguished son Willis, "Don't let the Lincoln in you die." He was still at the height of his powers when death claimed him. His family gathered round for an affectionate renewal of their happy days together. He had left instructions for his lifelong friend, Roger Nooe to give the funeral address and for me to preside at that last occasion. Only an orator understands an orator, and Roger Nooe is one of the very best. His eloquent remarks lifted up the splendor of that life which gave meaning and charm to an entire generation. Dr. Nooe's closing remarks were, "I can only say to my lifelong friend, 'Edgar, Till we meet again.'" At that moment the great organ sounded forth Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" and the fifty voice choir sang through their tears as if it were in the choir lofts of heaven, "The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth—forever and ever—Hallelujah!"

#### Eva Jean Wrather Speaker at Tennessee Assembly Breakfast



Miss Eva Jean Wrather, a trustee and founding member of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, will speak at the Society's Annual Tennessee Assembly Breakfast to be held in the assembly hall of the Thomas W. Phillips Memorial in Nashville on Sunday morning, April 27. Miss Wrather, who was chairman of the DCHS Fine Arts Committee at the time the Society's famed edifice was built in 1957-1958, will speak on the meaning and message of the art glass and stone carvings in the Phillips Memorial.



## THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

### *Report and Honor Roll Through January 31, 1969*

### LIST OF DONORS

(Number in Parentheses Indicates Number of Gifts)

Abrams, Dr. and Mrs. Arnold C. (2), St. Louis, Mo.

Adams, Mr. and Mrs. Harold K., Normal, Ill.  
Alexander, W. A. (2), Nashville, Tenn.

Ardery, Mrs. William B. (3), Paris, Ky.

Austin, Dr. and Mrs. (deceased) Spencer P., Indianapolis, Ind.

Bader, Mrs. Jesse M., New York, N.Y.

Baker, Gus (3), Nashville, Tenn.

Baker, Mr. and Mrs. T. M. (2), Winchester, Tenn.

Barbre, Mrs. Verne Jennings (2), Ephrata, Wash.

Barclay, Dr. John (2), Austin, Tex.

Barker, James V. (6), Chester, Va.

Barlow, M. M. (2), New York, N.Y.

Barnes, W. Graham (2), Wellesley, Mass.

Beach, Mrs. Bess K. (deceased)

Bell, Mrs. Ernest B. (5), Paducah, Ky.

Bell, Dr. and Mrs. Wayne H. (2), Nashville, Tenn.

Berkey, Jonas, Anchorage, Ky.

Bickel, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin H., Jr., Louisville, Ky.

Blakemore, Dr. and Mrs. Wm. Barnett, Chicago, Ill.

Board of Higher Education (2), Indianapolis, Ind.

Bolman, Dr. Paul M., St. Louis, Mo.

Bonner, Mrs. Lexie M., Huntland, Tenn.

Bosh, Ray W., Dearborn, Mich.

Boswell, Mr. and Mrs. Bebe, Jackson, Tenn.

Braxton, Mr. and Mrs. H. Galt, Kinston, N.C.

Brown, Anna Kathryn, Chilhowee, Mo.

Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Carl R., Lakewood, Ohio

Brown, Harlan R. (2), Ashland, Ky.

Brown, Tom J., Houston, Tex.

Bryan, Mr. and Mrs. W. A., Jr., Nashville, Tenn.

Buckner, Dr. and Mrs. Geo. W. (2), Chapel Hill, N.C.

Buell, Franklin B., Hiram, Ohio

Burnley, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin R. (4), Nashville, Tenn.

Burns, Dr. Robert W. (3), Atlanta, Ga.

Burns, T. Lee, Knoxville, Tenn.

Bush, Mr. and Mrs. G. F. (5), Tulsa, Okla.

Cadwell, Dr. and Mrs. Merrill L., Indianapolis, Ind.

Calvin, Mr. and Mrs. A. Edwin (2), Flint, Mich.

Carlisle, Byron, Indianapolis, Ind.

Carmack, Mrs. I. W., Decatur, Ga.

On January 31, 1969, principal assets in the Disciples of Christ Historical Foundation totaled \$51,439.

Since the Foundation was established November 22, 1961, there have been 621 separate donations. Gifts have ranged in size from \$1.00 to \$5000. Twenty-four named funds, open to additional gifts, have been established. Thirty-three persons have been honored by gifts sent in their name.

The Foundation has received four donations of stock and has been the beneficiary of two estates. Two persons have named the Foundation as recipient of profits from the sale of their books.

The Foundation's official report for distribution to Foundation donors and to Society members is prepared each year as of November 30. Since the distribution of that report in early December until January 31, an additional \$1,800 has been received. All donors through that date are included in the Honor Roll listed herein.

Cartwright, Dr. Lin D. (3), St. Louis, Mo.  
Central Woodward Christian Church, Detroit, Mich.  
Chamness, Mr. and Mrs. Earle, Quincy, Ill.  
Chandler, Miss Bessie E., St. Louis, Mo.  
Chaplin, Miss Clara (4), Indianapolis, Ind.  
Chastain, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph E., Dallas, Tex.



## Vachel Lindsay, the Poet Who Goes A-tramping

By Paul V. D. Hoysradt

"PIPING down the valleys wild,  
Piping songs of pleasant glee,  
On a cloud I saw a child,  
And he laughing said to me:  
'Pipe a song about a lamb!'  
So I piped the merry cheer . . ."

William Blake wrote these lines more than a hundred years ago, but they might almost have been written yesterday, they describe so well the life and spirit of Vachel Lindsay, America's most famous tramp-poet. Mr. Lindsay was born in Springfield, Illinois, and he still makes his home there. A few years ago, however, he took several long trips afoot through the south and west. He carried no money, but whenever he stopped at a house, he used to give the family copies of his poems and help with the work about the place. When there were children in the home, he would often recite his poems aloud; quite naturally this made him all the more welcome as an overnight guest, for there are few homes in which the little folks do not like to hear poetry recited to them.

Everywhere he went the happy tramp-poet would preach his gospel of beauty—the gospel that teaches people to see beauty in nature, books, music, and fine, noble acts. He was like a knight errant—always trying to dispel gloom and sorrow with songs and words about the most beautiful things in life.

Now, within the past two years, however, Mr. Lindsay has become deeply absorbed in his poem games. In these games the audience chants together the most musical parts of his poems while the speaker, or a chorus, chants the minor parts. It is a capital game, full of entertainment, and in the places where it has been tried out, it has brought no end of fun to grown-ups as well as to the little people in the audiences. If you should ever want to try to play the game yourself, you should use some of the poems in Mr. Lindsay's book "The Chinese Nightingale". "The Potatoes' Dance" and the poem in which occurs the refrain: "Who are the Camels? We are the Camels." are both splendid poems for this game. Then there is that other fine poem, "The Mysterious Cat," in which Mr. Lindsay's earlier book "The Congo", which begins like this:

"I saw a proud, mysterious cat,  
I saw a proud, mysterious cat  
Too proud to catch a mouse or rat—  
Mew, mew, mew."

Mr. Lindsay has written several poems which may some day be prized and memorized as carefully as Longfellow's "The Skeleton in Armor", and Whittier's "Bare-foot Boy" are to-day. One of these is "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight", another is "General William Booth Enters Heaven". If you are eager to know some of the poems that may be treasured when we are much older than we are to-day, it may pay you to read both of these. The one about Lincoln was written at Springfield, Illinois, during the Great War, and Mr. Lindsay's description of our greatest American is one of the classics of the age:

IT IS portentous, and a thing of state,  
That here at midnight, in our little town,  
A mournful figure walks, and will not rest,  
Near the old courthouse pacing up and down.

Or by his homestead, or the shadowed yards  
He lingers where his children used to play,  
Or through the market, on the well-worn stones  
He stalks until the dawn stars burn away.

A bronzed lank man! His suit of ancient black,  
A famous high-top hat and plain worn shawl  
Make him the quaint great figure that men love,  
The prairie lawyer, master of us all.

He can not sleep upon his hillside now.  
He is among us, as in times before!  
And we who toss and lie awake for long  
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the door.

His head is bowed. He thinks on men and kings.  
Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he sleep?

Too many peasants fight, they know not why,  
Too many homesteads in black terror weep. . . .

It breaks his heart that kings must murder still,  
That all his hours of travail here for men  
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white peace  
That he may sleep upon his hill again?

LINCOLN WALKS AT MIDNIGHT.

(Written at Springfield, Ill.)

It is portentous, and a thing of state  
That here at midnight, in our little town  
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest  
Near the old courthouse pacing up and  
down,

Or by his homestead, or the shadowed yards  
He lingers where his children used to  
play,

Or through the market, on the well-worn  
stones  
He stalks until the dawn stars burn away.

A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient  
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And we who toss and lie awake for long  
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass  
the door.

His head is bowed. He thinks on men and  
kings.

Yea, when the sick world cries, how can  
he sleep?

Too many peasants fight, they know not  
why,

Too many homesteads in black terror  
weep.

The sins of all the war lords burn his heart.

He sees the dreadnaughts scouring every  
main.

He carries on his shawl-wrapt shoulders  
now

The bitterness, the folly and the pain.

He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn  
Shall come—the thinking hope of Europe  
free;

The league of sober folk, the Workers'  
Earth

Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp and  
Sea.

It breaks his heart that kings must murder  
still,

That all his hours of travail here for men  
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white  
peace

That he may sleep upon his hill again?

—Vachel Lindsay in the New York Inde-  
pendent.



Lindsay, Vachel

E 702 LINDSAY, Vachel. Noted poet. Autograph Letter Signed, 2pp, 8vo, Springfield, Ill., Dec. 8, 1911. To Brand Whitlock. "... I cannot resist the temptation to try to keep your good opinion, therefore I send you rhymes on my two saints. These are almost credal statements with me—and written years ago—they hold stronger than ever. God knows I would only desire to do some little thing to vindicate my belief in them before I turn to dust—so that a friend could say—'he was—in a tiny degree a Franciscan—to a limited extent—a Buddhist.' ... I only hope I have planted these rhymes where they will take root. To find them—some day—still living—that is the answer." Early letter signed "Nicholas Vachel Lindsay." Rare. \$20.00

Collection # 634

## LINCOLN WALKS AT MIDNIGHT

(Written at Springfield, Ill.)

It is portentous, and a thing of  
state,  
That here at midnight, in our little  
town,  
A mournful figure walks, and will not  
rest,  
Near the old courthouse pacing up  
and down.

Or by his homestead, or the shadowed  
yards  
He lingers where his children used to  
play,  
Or through the market, on the well-  
worn stones  
He stalks until the dawn stars burn  
away.

A bronzed lank man! His suit of an-  
cient black,  
A famous high-top hat and plain-  
worn shawl  
Make him the quaint, great figure that  
men love,  
The prairie lawyer, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside  
now.  
He is among us, as in times be-  
fore!  
And we who toss and lie awake for  
long  
Breathe deep, and start, to see him  
pass the door.

His head is bowed. He thinks on men  
and kings.  
Yea, when the sick world cries, how  
can he sleep?  
Too many peasants fight, they know  
not why,  
Too many homesteads in black ter-  
ror weep.

The sins of all the war lords burn his  
heart.  
He sees the dreadnaughts scouring  
every main,  
He carries on his shawl-wrapped shoul-  
ders now  
The bitterness, the folly, and the  
pain.

He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn  
Shall come—the thinking hope of  
Europe free;  
The League of sober folk, the Workers'  
Earth  
Bringing long peace to Cornland,  
Alp, and Sea.

It breaks his heart that kings must  
murder still,  
That all his hours of travail here for  
men  
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring  
white peace  
That he may sleep upon his hill  
again?

—Vachel Lindsey.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN WALKS AT MIDNIGHT

It is portentous, and a thing of state

That here at midnight, in our little town,

A mourning figure walks, and will not rest,

Near the old court-house pacing up and down,

Or by his homestead, or in shadowed yards

He lingers where his children used to play;

Or through the market, on the well-worn stones

He stalks until the dawn-stars burn away.

A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient black,

A famous high top-hat and plain worn shawl

Make him the quaint great figure that men love.

The prairie-lawyer, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside now.

He is among us:—as in times before!

And we who toss and lie awake for long

Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the door. —*Vachel Lindsay.*

## Lincoln Walks at Midnight

(Written at Springfield, Illinois)

*It is portentous, and a thing of state,  
That here at midnight, in our little town,  
A mournful figure walks, and will not rest,  
Near the old courthouse pacing up and  
down.*

*Or by his homestead, or the shadowed yards  
He lingers where his children used to  
play,  
Or through the market, on the well-worn  
stones  
He stalks until the dawn stars burn  
away.*

*A bronzed lank man! His suit of ancient  
black  
A famous high-top hat and plain-worn  
shawl  
Make him the quaint, great figure that men  
love,  
The prairie lawyer, master of us all.*

*He cannot sleep upon his hillside now:  
He is among us, as in times before!  
And we who toss and lie awake for long  
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass  
the door.*

*His head is bowed. He thinks on men and*

*Yea, when the sick world cries, how can  
he sleep?*

*Too many peasants fight, they know not  
why,  
Too many homesteads in black terror  
weep.*

*The sins of all the war lords burn his heart.  
He sees the dreadnaughts scouring every  
main,  
He carries on his shawl-wrapped shoulders  
now  
The bitterness, the folly, and the pain.*

*He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn  
Shall come—the thinking hope of Europe  
free;  
The League of sober folk, the Workers'  
Earth  
Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp,  
and Sea.*

*It breaks his heart that kings must murder  
still,  
That all his hours of travail here for men  
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring  
white peace  
That he may sleep upon his hill again?*



Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight

By Vachel Lindsay  
(In Springfield, Illinois)

It is portentous, and a thing of state  
That here at midnight, in our little  
town

A mourning figure walks, and will  
not rest.  
Near the old court-house pacing up  
and down,

Or by his homestead, or in the  
shadowed yards

He lingers where his children used to  
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Or through the market, on the well-  
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Seem yet in vain. And who will bring  
white peace

# Lindsay's Teacher Presents Valued Books To High School

*Gift Of Noted Poet's Writings, Rare Volumes Memorial Of Miss Wilcox To Her Famous Pupil.*

By ROBERT L. NICHOLAS.

State Journal City Editor.

Tribute to her most illustrious pupil was extended yesterday by Miss Susan E. Wilcox when she presented to the library of Springfield High school a bookcase filled with the writings of the noted poet, Vachel Lindsay.

The presentation took place in the school library at 4 p. m. before a group of teachers and friends and associates of the late poet. The memory of Lindsay, whose fame has grown with each passing year, was extolled in a brief program which concluded with a talk by Miss Wilcox, who for many years was head of the English department at the high school, and who was Lindsay's teacher forty-five years ago.

In presenting the books and case to the library, Miss Wilcox said she felt it was a fitting memorial to Springfield High school's most distinguished student. The handsome bookcase, of Northern white birch, was built by Carl Heiden, industrial arts instructor at the Lawrence school.

## Autographed Copies.

Included in the set of volumes containing Lindsay's writings, Miss Wilcox explained, are some books now out of print, a number of autographed copies and others with comments on the margins by the poet.

Miss Wilcox acquired the books over a period of several years. Their monetary value is considerable, and their worth to pupils seeking inspiration from the brilliant mind of the poet is incalculable.

Taking part in the program were Miss Elizabeth Graham, present head of the English department, who presided; Gorm Rasmussen, high school student; little 8-year-old Mary Louise Proctor, Attorney Arthur Fitzgerald, Bob Schulze, a student, and the Vachel Lindsay verse speaking choir, composed of twenty-two high school boys and girls.

Miss Graham discussed Lindsay as a friend to Springfield High school English teachers. She told how he often was able to teach them points about poetry and the beauty of the English language.

## Pupils On Program.

Young Rasmussen read an essay he had written on Lindsay's interest in youth, in which he quoted remarks and writings of the poet that showed he enjoyed speaking and working with young people more than any other group.

Captivating the audience with her charm and naivete, although she confessed afterward she was "plenty scared," little Miss Proctor recited six of Lindsay's brief-er poems. She prefaced her recitation with the explanation that these poems were her own choice. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Romaine Proctor.

Poems she recited included: The Queen of Bubbles, The Moon's the North Wind's Cooky, The Little Turtle, Factory Windows Are Always Broken, An Explanation of the Grasshopper and the Lion, verses which reveal Lindsay as a great children's poet.

Attorney Fitzgerald, who was a schoolmate of Lindsay's recalled his association with the poet at the old high school at Fourth and Madison streets from which Lindsay was graduated in 1897. He said that Lindsay was far more studious and serious than most of his companions, preferring to read rather than play. He seldom took part in athletics, but did compete in the mile walk then an event in track and field meets.

"He was a great walker," Fitzgerald said, "and when a few of us walked home together from school, Vachel usually was half a block ahead by the time we reached his house."

A brief poem, written and read by Bob Schulze, expressed the student's deep admiration for the poet.

## Choir Chants Poems

A dramatic part of the program was the rendition of two of Lindsay's poems by the verse speaking choir, directed by Grant Fletcher. Chanting them as the poet himself used to do, the choir gave The Chipmunk and The Congo with a sincerity and beauty that moved its hearers. The choir was organized some weeks ago to chant several of Lindsay's poems on the nation-wide "Pilgrimage of Poetry" broadcast from the poet's home here.

Mr. Heiden, commissioned by Miss Wilcox to make the bookcase, described how he fashioned it from white birch, one of the finest of cabinet woods.

When Miss Wilcox had ended her brief explanation of her gift she unveiled the bookcase, dedicating it to the use and benefit of the pupils of Springfield High school that they may gain inspiration from the fruits of one of the nation's greatest geniuses.



POEMS WORTH  
READING AGAIN

Abraham Lincoln Walks at  
Midnight

Vachel Lindsay (1879-1932), in "Poems."

It is portentous, and a thing of state  
That here at midnight, in our little  
town

A mourning figure walks, and will  
not rest

Near the old courthouse pacing up  
and down.

On by his homestead, or in shadowed  
yards

He lingers where his children used  
to play,

Or through the market, on the well-  
worn stone

He stalks until the dawn stars burn  
away.

A bronzed, lank man! His suit of  
ancient black,

A famous high top-hat, and a plain  
worn shawl

Make him the quaint great figure  
that men love,

The prairie lover, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside  
now,

He is among us:—as in times before!

And we who toss or lie awake for  
long

Breathe deep, and start, to see him  
pass the door.

His head is bared. He thinks on men  
and kings.

Yea, when the sick world cries how  
can he sleep?

Too many peasants fight, they know  
not why.

Too many homesteads in bleak  
terror weep.

The sins of all the war lords burn  
his heart.

He sees the dreadnoughts scouring  
every main.

He carries on his shawl-wrapped  
shoulders now

The bitterness, the folly, and the  
pain.

He cannot rest until a spirit dawn  
Shall come: the shining map of  
Europe free

The league of sober-folk, the work-  
er's earth

Bringing long peace to Cornland,  
Alp, and Sea.

It breaks his heart that kings must  
murder still,

That all his hours of travail here  
for men

Seem yet in vain; and who will bring  
white peace

That he may sleep upon his hill  
again?

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN WALKS AT MIDNIGHT.

In Springfield, Illinois.

It is portentous, and a thing of state  
That here at midnight, in our little town  
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest,  
Near the old courthouse pacing up and down,

Or by his homestead, or in shadowed yards  
He lingers where his children used to play,  
Or through the market, on the well worn stones  
He stalks until the dawn stars burn away.

A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient black,  
A famous high top-hat and plain worn shawl,  
Make him the quaint great figure that men love,  
The prairie lawyer, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside now.  
He is among us:—As in times before!  
And we who toss and lie awake for long  
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the door.

His head is bowed. He thinks on men and kings.  
Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he sleep?  
Too many peasants fight, they know not why,  
Too many homesteads in black terror weep.

The sins of all the war-lords burn his heart.  
He sees the dreadnoughts scouring every main.  
He carries on his shawl-wrapped shoulders now  
The bitterness, the folly and the pain.

He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn  
Shall come;—the shining hope of Europe free:  
The league of sober folk, the Worker's earth,  
Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp and Sea.

It breaks his heart that kings must murder still,  
That all his hours of travail here for men  
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white peace  
That he may sleep upon his hill again?

—By Vachel Lindsay.

From the Congo and Other Poems, by Vachel Lindsay.  
Section entitled War, Macmillan Company.



*Lindsay, Vachel*  
~~Masters, E. J.~~

Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight

"It is portentous and a thing  
of state —"

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WALKS AT MIDNIGHT

(In Springfield, Ill.)

It is portentous, and a thing of state  
That here at midnight, in our little town  
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Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white peace  
That he may sleep upon his hill again?

—Vachel Lindsay, in "Poems of the Great War."

ORIGINAL  
FILED IN  
BROADSIDES  
DRAWER

# THE VIRGINIANS ARE COMING AGAIN

From the American Mercury, July, 1928

This song is to be chanted to your own unwritten  
troubadour chant, invented by yourself  
after reading it many times your-  
self aloud out-of-doors.

## I

Babbitt, your tribe is passing away.  
This is the end of your infamous day.  
The Virginians are coming again.  
With your neat little safety-vault boxes,  
With your faces like pease and foxes,  
You  
Short-legged, short-armed, short-minded men,  
Your short-sighted days are over,  
Your haluts of strutting through clover,  
Your movie-thugs, killing off souls and dreams,  
Your magazines, drying up healing streams,  
Your newspapers, blasting truth and splendor,  
Your shysters, ruining progress and glory,  
Babbitt, your story is passing away.  
The Virginians are coming again.

All set for the victory, calling the raid  
I see them, the next generation,  
Gentlemen, hard-riding, long-legged men,  
With horse-whip, dog-whip, gauntlet and braid,  
Mutineers, musketeers,  
In command  
Unafraid:

Great-grandsons of tidewater, and the bark-cabins,  
Bards of the Blue-ridge, in buckskin and boots,  
Up from the proudest war-path we have known  
The Virginians are coming again.

The sons of ward-healers  
Threw out the ward-healers,  
The sons of bartenders  
Threw out the bartenders,  
And made our streets triek-boxes all in a day,  
Kicked out the old pests in a virtuous way.

The new tribe sold kerosene, gasoline, paraffine.  
Babbitt sold Judas, Babbitt sold Christ,  
Babbitt sold everything under the sun.  
The Moon-Proud consider a trader a hog.  
The Moon-Proud are coming again.

Bartenders were gnomes,  
Foreigners, tyrants, hairy babboons.  
But you are no better with saxophone tunes,  
Phonograph tunes, radio tunes,  
Water-power tunes, gasoline tunes, dynamo tunes,  
And pitiful souls like your pitiful tunes,  
And erawing old insolence blocking the road,

So, Babbitt, your racket is passing away.  
Your sons will be changelings, and burn down your world.  
Fire-eaters, troubalours, conquistadors.

Your sons will be born, refusing your toad,  
Thin-skinned scholars, hard-riding men,  
Poets unharnessed, the moon their abode,  
With the statesmen's code, the gentlemen's code,  
With Jefferson's code, Washington's code,  
With Powhatan's code!  
From your own loins, for your fearful defeat  
The Virginians are coming again.

## II

Our first Virginians were peasants' children,  
But the Power of Powhatan reddened their blood.  
Up from the sod came splendor and flood.  
Eating the maize made them more than men,  
Potomac fountains made gods of men.

## III

In your tottering age, not so long from you now,  
The terror will blast, the armies will whirl,  
Cavalier boy beside cavalier girl!  
In the glory of pride, not the pride of the rich,  
In the glory of statesmanship, not of the ditch.  
The old grand manner, lost no longer:

Exquisite art born with heart-bleeding song  
Will make you die horribly raving at wrong.  
You will not know your sons who are true to this soil,

For Babbitt could never count much beyond ten,  
For Babbitt could never quite comprehend men.  
You will die in your shame, understanding not day.

Out of your loins, to your utmost confusion  
The Virginians are coming again.

Do you think boys and girls that I pass on the street,  
More strong than their fathers, more fair than their fathers,  
More clean than their fathers, more wild than their fathers,  
More in love than their fathers, deep in thought not their fathers',  
Are meat for your schemes diabolically neat?

Do you think that all youth is but grist to your mill  
And what you dare plan for them, boys will fulfill?  
The next generation is free. You are gone.  
Out of your loins, to your utmost confusion  
The Virginians are coming again.



## IV

Rouse the reader to read it right.  
Find a good hill by the full-moon light.  
Gather the boys and chant all night—  
"The Virginians are coming again."

Put in rhetoric, whisper and hint,  
Put in shadow, murmur and glint;  
Tangle and tangle this song like a spur,  
Sweep over each tottering bridge with a whirl,  
Clearer and faster up main street and pike  
Till sparks flare up from the flints that strike.

Leap metrical ditches with bridle let loose.  
This song is a war, with an iron-shod use.

Let no musician, with blotter and pad  
Scribble his pot-hooks to make the song sad.  
Find  
Your own rhythms  
When Robert E. Lee  
Gallops once more to the plain from the sea.  
Give the rebel yell every river they gain.

Heave Lee's light cavalry rhyme with rain.  
In the star-proud, natural fury of men  
The Virginians are coming again.





